

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

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1. (previously presented) An image forming sheet comprising an identification mark provided within said sheet, said mark being less likely to be visually perceived from the external appearance of said sheet,

the image forming sheet having a laminate structure of a plurality of substrate sheets and the identification mark being provided between said plurality of substrate sheets,

said plurality of substrate sheets being whitish thereby concealing the identification mark from human's eyes.

2. (cancelled).

3. (previously presented) The image forming sheet according to claim 1, wherein said identification mark contains a material which is capable of absorbing an electromagnetic radiation with a wavelength $\lambda 1$ and is capable of emitting an electromagnetic radiation with a wavelength $\lambda 2$ different from the wavelength $\lambda 1$.

4. (original) The image forming sheet according to claim 3, wherein said electromagnetic radiation with a wavelength $\lambda 1$ absorbed by said material is infrared

radiation and said electromagnetic radiation with a wavelength $\lambda 2$ emitted from said material is also infrared radiation.

5. (previously presented) The image forming sheet according to any one of claims 1, 3, and 4, which is a thermal transfer image receiving sheet.

6. (previously presented) An identification method comprising the steps of: providing the image forming sheet according to any one of claims 1, and 3 to 5; and detecting the identification mark provided in the image forming sheet with a sensor to identify the presence or absence of the image forming sheet and/or the type of the image forming sheet.

7. (previously presented) An image forming apparatus comprising:
a sensor which, when the image forming sheet according to any one of claims 1, and 3 to 5 has been placed in said apparatus, detects the identification mark provided in the image forming sheet;

a discrimination means for performing discrimination for identifying the presence or absence of the image forming sheet and/or the type of the image forming sheet based on a signal detected by the sensor; and

a control unit for determining the operation of image formation based on the result of discrimination treatment.